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Security Council

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Letter dated 19 May 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the United States in February 2006 (see annex). This assessment has been prepared under my own responsibility following consultations with other members of the Council.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) John R. **Bolton**

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Annex to the letter dated 19 May 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the United States (February 2006)

Overview

Under the presidency of Ambassador John R. Bolton, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations, the Security Council engaged in an extensive programme of work during the month of February 2006. In an effort to streamline the working methods of the Council and modernize Council operations, the President instituted daily consultations to promote more interactive and timely discussions, and requested that the Secretariat provide daily briefings to contribute to a more enlightened consensus.

During the month of February 2006, the Council held 36 meetings, including 17 closed consultations of the whole, 5 open briefings, 2 formal meetings, 2 private meetings and 3 public meetings, and hosted one event. The Council adopted four resolutions: 1657 (2006), 1658 (2006), 1659 (2006) and 1660 (2006). The Council produced six presidential statements: S/PRST/2006/5, S/PRST/2006/6, S/PRST/2006/7, S/PRST/2006/8, S/PRST/2006/9 and S/PRST/2006/10.

Africa

Côte d'Ivoire

In a letter dated 1 February (S/2006/71), the Secretary-General recommended that the Council consider temporarily redeploying up to one mechanized infantry battalion and one formed police unit from the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) for an initial period of three months.

On 6 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1657 (2006), as requested by the Secretary-General, authorizing the Secretary-General to redeploy an infantry company from UNMIL to UNOCI.

On 7, 10, 15, 17 and 21 February, in consultations of the whole, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hédi Annabi, briefed the Council on the overall security situation in Côte d'Ivoire relating to the recent elections. In the briefing on 17 February, the Secretariat circulated notes from the Office of the High Representative for the elections in Côte d'Ivoire concerning the talks held in Abidjan on 16 February. During the briefing on 21 February, the Assistant Secretary-General briefed the Council on the summary of those talks.

On 20 February, as requested, the Secretariat circulated the final communiqué of the fourth ministerial meeting of the International Working Group on Côte d'Ivoire to the Council.

On 23 February, after consultations of the whole, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2006/9), reiterating the Council's full support for the International Working Group and endorsing its fourth final communiqué. The Council also urged the Ivorian State authorities to facilitate, notably in the west, the return of humanitarian agencies and organizations.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 15 February, in consultations of the whole, the Permanent Representative of Peru, Ambassador Oswaldo de Rivero, briefed the Council on the conclusions of the Group of Experts concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo and resolution 1649 (2005). As Chairperson of the Committee, Ambassador de Rivero circulated to the Council recommendations from the report of the Group of Experts to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004).

On 28 February, in consultations of the whole, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, briefed the Council on the positive changes that had taken place and on the remaining challenges concerning the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Ethiopia and Eritrea

On 8 and 16 February, in consultations of the whole, the Under-Secretary-General and the Assistant Secretary-General, for Peacekeeping Operations, respectively, briefed the Council on the status of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), with an emphasis on the military situation in the Temporary Security Zone and adjacent areas, the restrictions on movement imposed by the Government of Eritrea on UNMEE, and the continuing humanitarian crisis there. In the briefing on 16 February, the Assistant Secretary-General reported that the Government of Eritrea had detained members of the UNMEE staff.

On 24 February, in consultations of the whole, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, briefed the Council on the current situation within the border region, noting that Eritrean restrictions on UNMEE staff remained in place. In addition, he discussed conclusions drawn from the meeting of the witnesses to the Algiers Agreement, concerning the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission.

On 24 February, after consultations of the whole, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2006/10), welcoming the successful convening on 22 February of the meeting of the witnesses to the Algiers Agreements. The Council called on both sides to cooperate with the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission to implement its decisions without further delay, and demanded that the parties allow UNMEE staff to perform their duties without restrictions, providing them with all necessary access, assistance and support.

Sudan

On 3 February, after consultations of the whole, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2006/5), concerning the reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan, in which it requested the Secretary-General, jointly with the African Union, to initiate contingency planning without delay on a range of options for a possible transition from the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) to a

United Nations operation in Darfur. The Council commended the efforts of the African Union for the successful deployment of AMIS, for its significant contributions in Darfur, and reiterated in the strongest terms the need for all parties in Darfur to end the violence and atrocities.

On 9 February, in consultations of the whole, the Tripoli Agreement and the Declaration of Tripoli were distributed to the Council by the Permanent Representative of the Congo to the United Nations, Ambassador Basile Ikouebe. The document describes the end of the Chadian-Sudanese conflict and the agreement reached at the mini-summit hosted by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

On 27 February, in consultations of the whole, the Permanent Representative of Greece and Chairperson of the Sudan sanctions Committee, Ambassador Adamantios Vassilakis briefed the Council on the Committee's ongoing discussions to draft a final report with recommendations for the Council, stating that a final report might be ready by mid-March.

Americas

Haiti

On 2 February, the Secretary-General submitted to the Council his report on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (S/2006/60), in which he proposed a six-month extension of the current mandate to allow for further assessment of the situation after a new administration had taken office, and to permit the formulation of recommendations for a post-electoral strategy for MINUSTAH.

On 7 to 10, 14 to 17, 21 and 22 February, in consultations of the whole, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations updated the Council on developments surrounding the Haitian elections held on 7 February, focusing on the security issues involved, voter expectancy and turnout, candidacy response, and general details of the situation, including the role of MINUSTAH. In the briefing on 10 February, the Assistant Secretary-General confirmed that, despite some irregularities, no fraud had been established in the electoral process. In his briefing on 17 February, the Assistant Secretary-General reported that the Provisional Electoral Council had named René Préval the official electoral winner. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Juan Gabriel Valdès, provided the briefing on 22 February.

On 9 February, the Council held a private meeting with the troop-contributing countries to MINUSTAH, at which the Assistant Secretary-General updated the troop-contributing countries on the status of MINUSTAH, and on the recent Haitian elections.

On 9 February, after consultations of the whole, and after a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the report of the Secretary-General on MINUSTAH (S/2006/60), the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2006/7) concerning the elections in Haiti, commending the people of Haiti on the successful first round of elections, and congratulating them for taking a fundamental step towards the restoration of democracy and stability. The Council called on all parties to respect the outcome of the elections and renounce all forms of violence.

On 14 February, after consultations of the whole, the Council issued a statement to the press in which it commended the Haitian people for their commitment to democracy as demonstrated by the high level of voter turn-out, and encouraged all parties to remain calm, to refrain from violence, and to respect the final results of the election. The Council called on Haitian political leaders to demonstrate statesmanship, moderation and reconciliation, while reiterating the Council's full support for efforts by MINUSTAH and the Transitional Government to ensure a secure and stable environment for the people of Haiti.

On 14 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1658 (2006) extending the existing mandate of MINUSTAH until 15 August 2006, as requested by the Secretary-General.

On 15 February, after consultations of the whole, the Council agreed to issue a statement to the press on Haiti, in which it called on all Haitians to respect the results of the election and to remain engaged in the political process, including refraining from violence and the pursuit of possible post-electoral irregularities.

On 16 February, after consultations of the whole, the Council agreed to issue a statement to the press on Haiti, in which it applauded the Haitian people for their continuing commitment to democracy and to the promotion of political dialogue and national reconciliation, and congratulated René Préval on his victory in the Haitian presidential election.

On 22 February, at an open meeting, the Interim Prime Minister of Haiti, Gérard Latortue, briefed the Council on the current political situation in Haiti.

Asia

Afghanistan

On 6 February the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, Abdullah Abdullah, addressed a letter to the Secretary-General in which he expressed the hope that the Security Council might reflect in its resolutions the continuing importance of international support for Afghanistan's reconstruction, and the significance in this context of the Afghanistan Compact.

On 10 February, the Council held an open briefing, during which the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operation provided an update on developments in the country. He focused on the outcome of the London Conference on Afghanistan, the security situation on the ground, and recent political events surrounding the formation of the Parliament. The Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Ravan Farhâdi, was present at the Council table. The Afghanistan Mission to the United Nations distributed a document entitled "Building on success: The Afghanistan Compact" to the Council (see S/2006/90).

Also on 10 February, the Council held a private meeting, at which Ambassador Farhâdi provided a national response to the Afghanistan Compact and insight into the current interim development strategy. The Under-Secretary-General was present at the Council table.

On 15 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1659 (2006) in which it endorsed the Afghanistan Compact.

Iraq

The International Mission for Iraqi Elections announced on 10 February that the parliamentary elections held in December 2005, and the subsequent electoral process, had been transparent and credible; that the confirmed parliamentary seats represented a vast majority of the Iraqi population; and that the final estimation of voter turn-out in December was over 75 per cent of the Iraqi population.

On 14 February, in consultations of the whole, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Angela Kane, briefed the Council on the certified election results pertaining to the Iraqi Council of Representatives. The Assistant Secretary-General also noted that violence levels in Iraq had eclipsed pre-election levels, and that there were ongoing disruptions to electricity, and to the transport of food and water.

On 14 February, after consultations of the whole, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2006/8), concerning the final Iraqi election results, by which it commended and congratulated the people of Iraq for demonstrating their commitment to a peaceful, democratic political process, and for having braved difficult conditions and the threat of violence to cast their votes. The Council stressed the importance of inclusiveness, national dialogue and unity as Iraq's political development moved forward, and condemned acts of terrorism. The Council also underlined the need for international support from all States and international organizations to assist Iraq's wide-ranging political, economic and social development.

On 22 February, after consultations of the whole, the Council agreed to issue a statement to the press on Iraq, strongly condemning the attack on the holy Shrine of the Imams in Samarra. The Council also called on Iraqis to support a peaceful political process, a national dialogue and unity.

On 24 February, in consultations of the whole, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Ibrahim Gambari, briefed the Council on the situation in Iraq, mentioning escalating violence, the need for all parties to remain calm, and the process of formation of the new government.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 3 February, after consultations of the whole, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2006/6), concerning the Palestinian Legislative Council election results, in which it congratulated the Palestinian people on a free, fair and secure electoral process. The Council expressed its expectation that a new government would remain committed to realizing the aspirations of the Palestinian people for peace and statehood. The Council reiterated the importance of, and need to achieve, a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East based on all of its relevant resolutions.

On 28 February, the Council held an open briefing during which the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Alvaro de Soto, briefed the Council on current Palestinian, Israeli and Lebanese political developments and on the security situation in the region.

On 28 February, in consultations of the whole, the Special Coordinator further elaborated on his open briefing of the same day.

Europe

Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro)

On 14 February, the Council held a public meeting at which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Søren Jessen-Petersen, briefed the Council on the major issues defining current politics in Kosovo. Statements were made by the representatives of Serbia and Montenegro, Austria (on behalf of the European Union), Ukraine, Turkey and Albania.

Other issues

Informal event

On 6 February, the Council hosted an event at which it invited Senator Richard Lugar, Chairman of the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and other Senate Committee members, to meet informally with members of the Security Council.

Counter-terrorism committees

On 16 February, the Chairperson of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, Ambassador Ellen Løj of Denmark, circulated the programme of work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee for the period from 1 January to 31 March 2006.

On 21 February, at a public meeting, the Chairpersons of the three subsidiary bodies of the Security Council concerning counter-terrorism briefed the Council. Ambassador Ellen Løj, Permanent Representative of Denmark and Chairperson of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism; Ambassador César Mayoral, Permanent Representative of Argentina and Chairperson of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities; and Ambassador Peter Burian, Chairperson of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), all reported on the goals of their respective Committees. Statements were made by the representatives of Austria (on behalf of the European Union), Indonesia, Algeria, Brazil, Israel, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and the Syrian Arab Republic.

Security Council Working Group on children and armed conflict

On 21 February, at a closed meeting, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council Working Group on children and armed conflict pursuant to resolution 1612 (2005).

United Nations peacekeeping operations

On 22 February, the Council held a public meeting, at which the Under-Secretary-General and Chef de Cabinet of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, Mark Malloch Brown, briefed the Council on the steps the Secretariat is taking on the recent audit of peacekeeping procurement conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the actions being taken to improve procurement systems and crack down on waste, fraud and other potential abuses. The Council also heard statements by the representatives of South Africa (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Singapore, Austria (on behalf on the European Union), Sierra Leone (on behalf of the Group of African States), and Malaysia (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement).

Sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations

On 23 February, the Council held a public meeting, at which the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council on the progress made by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in implementing the strategy for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations. He also highlighted the efforts being undertaken to strengthen partnerships with the Office of Internal Oversight Services and other entities of the United Nations system, and illustrated how Member States could assist the Department in its strategy. The Council was also briefed by the Permanent Representative of Jordan Prince Zeid Al-Hussein, Adviser to the Secretary-General on sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations Peacekeeping personnel, on the items on the reform agenda. The representatives of Brazil, Singapore, Austria (on behalf on the European Union) and Canada also spoke on the issue.

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

On 28 February, having considered the proposal made by the President of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1660 (2006), providing authority to the Secretary-General to appoint reserve judges, from among the ad litem judges, to be present at each stage of a trial to which they have been appointed, and to replace a judge if that judge is unable to continue to preside.